



# National Gathering on Unmarked Burials: Addressing Trauma in the Search and Recovery of Missing Children

Office of the Independent Special Interlocutor

in partnership with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation

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**November 28-30, 2022**  
**Winnipeg, MB**



**Office of the Independent  
Special Interlocutor**

for Missing Children and Unmarked  
Graves and Burial Sites associated  
with Indian Residential Schools

**Bureau de l'interlocutrice  
spéciale indépendante**

pour les enfants disparus et les tombes  
et les sépultures anonymes en lien avec  
les pensionnats indiens



**National Centre for  
Truth and Reconciliation**

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

**Centre national pour la  
vérité et la réconciliation**

UNIVERSITÉ DU MANITOBA

Wellness and Spiritual Health Supports will be onsite throughout the Gathering

# Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites associated with Indian Residential Schools



**Kimberly R. Murray,**  
Independent Special  
Interlocutor

It is my honour to welcome you to the second National Gathering on Missing Children and Unmarked Burials. We acknowledge that we are gathered on ancestral lands, Treaty 1 Territory, traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene Peoples, and on the National Homeland of the Red River Métis. I want to express my sincere gratitude to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation for agreeing to co-host this important Gathering.

Across Turtle Island, Survivors, Indigenous families and communities are leading the Sacred work of searching for the children who were never returned home from various institutions, including Indian Residential Schools, hospitals, sanatoria, industrial schools and reformatories. This is difficult and emotional work that weighs heavily on all our hearts. Survivors, Indigenous families and communities must have access to wellness supports to address the grief and trauma that these searches and each new recovery of unmarked burials brings.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada issued several Calls to Action in relation to health, wellness supports and the need for collaborative work on the part of governments, churches and other institutions so that communities can answer these four questions:

- Who are the children that died?
- What did the children die from?
- Where are the children buried? and
- How many children are missing?

Over the next few days, this National Gathering will provide an opportunity to hear from communities, wellness practitioners, and Indigenous medical professionals to further our collective understanding of colonial trauma, ambiguous loss, and grief. In addition, common experiences and community responses to the trauma will be shared. As we listen, learn and exchange knowledge, I know that each of us will be kind and gentle with one another and we will hold the Spirits of the missing children in our hearts and minds.

# Mandate of the Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites associated with Indian Residential Schools

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The Special Interlocutor will identify needed measures and make recommendations for a new federal legal framework to ensure the respectful and culturally appropriate treatment of unmarked graves and burial sites of children associated with former residential schools. This will be done in close collaboration with First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments, representative organizations, communities, Survivors and families, other departments of the Government of Canada, provinces and territories, and other relevant institutions such as church entities and record holders.

The Special Interlocutor will function independently and impartially, in a non-partisan and transparent manner to achieve the objectives of her mandate.

The Special Interlocutor has a two-year mandate and will deliver interim and final reports, with recommendations, to the federal Minister of Justice and the Attorney General of Canada. Knowledge shared at this National Gathering will inform the interim and final reports and recommendations.

## The work of the Special Interlocutor will be to:

**Engage** with First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments, representative organizations, communities, Survivors and families to discuss issues of concern around the identification, preservation, and protection of unmarked graves and burial sites, including the potential repatriation of remains

**Examine** the existing federal, provincial and territorial laws, regulations, tools and practices that currently apply and have applied to protect unmarked graves and burial sites connected to former Indian Residential Schools, as well as applicable Indigenous laws and protocols, in order to develop a description of the current legal framework

**Identify** areas of improvement in Canadian law and make recommendations for a new federal legal framework to identify, protect, and preserve unmarked burial sites connected to former Indian Residential Schools and lands associated with the schools



## Message from the Executive Director of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation



**Stephanie Scott,**  
Executive Director  
National Centre for Truth  
and Reconciliation

It has been a great honour to partner with the Office of the Independent Special Interlocutor in preparing this National Gathering. We are honoured to gather on Treaty 1 Territory, the original lands of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota and Dene Peoples. This gathering is also the homeland of the Red River Métis. A great many Inuit now call Winnipeg home as well.

This Gathering is the work of many hands. I would like to thank Elders Harry Bone and Florence Paynter for their wisdom and guidance. I would also like to acknowledge the National Advisory Committee on Missing Children and Unmarked Burials, and their Circle of Survivors, for their many contributions in designing and organizing this event. I am also deeply grateful to all the Survivors, leaders and other experts who have agreed to share their knowledge and experience.

The search for our missing children is sacred work of the heart. I know that we all share a sense of urgency: too much time has already passed without answers and without closure. We also know that we must move forward in a good way. We must honour and uphold First Nations, Inuit, and Métis laws and protocols. We must respect the voices of Survivors. And we must ensure that our actions heal, rather than cause further harm.

The extraordinary group of presenters, panelists, and facilitators who have been invited to lead sessions during this Gathering reflect the depth of expertise and experience of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. This gathering is a chance to share effective models of trauma informed care and to discuss lessons learned from communities at the forefront of the search for our missing children. It is also a chance to build new networks and communities so that we can support and care for each other in the difficult work ahead.

I am looking forward to listening, learning – and being with you – for this important and timely Gathering.



# The National Advisory Committee on Residential Schools, Missing Children and Unmarked Burials

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A number of workshops during this Gathering are being organized and facilitated by the National Advisory Committee on Residential Schools Missing Children and Unmarked Burials.

The National Advisory Committee was established in July 2022 to help First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities access independent, trusted, and expert information in their efforts to identify, locate, and commemorate their missing children.

The National Advisory Committee brings together individuals with a wide-range of experience and expertise in areas such as Indigenous laws and cultural protocols, forensics, archeology, archival research, criminal investigations, communications and working with Survivors.

Many of the Committee members have extensive first-hand experience in conducting research and ground searches related to unmarked graves. All are committed to respecting and upholding Indigenous protocols and promoting trauma-informed approaches.

## **The members of the National Advisory Committee are:**

- Elder Madeleine Basile (Atikamekw)
- Elder Harley Crowshoe (Blackfoot)
- Elder Verna DeMontigny (Red River Métis)
- Crystal Fraser (Gwichyà Gwich'in)
- Raymond Frogner (Cree)

- Rebekah Jacques (Métis)
- Andrew Martindale
- Brenda Reynolds (Saulteaux)
- Kisha Supernant (Métis/Papaschase)
- Kona Williams (Cree and Mohawk)

## **The Committee is guided by a Circle of Survivors whose members are:**

- Larry Ahenakew (Métis, Île-à-la-Crosse, SK)
- Jack Anawak (Inuk), Iqaluit, NU
- Jacquie Bouvier (Métis), Beauval, SK
- Terri Brown, (Tahltan Nation), BC
- Lillian Elias (Inuk), Inuvialuit, Mackenzie Delta, NT
- Romeo Saganash (Cree), Cree First Nation of Waswanipi First Nation, QC

The Committee's primary goal is to share information that can help address key needs and priorities of communities considering or already undertaking searches. The Committee will be producing tools such as factsheets and videos. Over the coming year, Committee members will also be participating in a number of workshops with communities in different regions to enable more in-depth conversations on these issues.

The National Advisory Committee is co-administered by the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada.

# Agenda

The Main Conference Room is located on the ground level of the Winnipeg Convention Centre.

All Breakfasts and Lunches will be available.

The Gathering is being livestreamed to the public with the exception of the Breakout Sessions.

Media may be on site and will be announced.

A photographer will be present and taking photos at the Gathering for use by the Office of the Special Interlocutor.

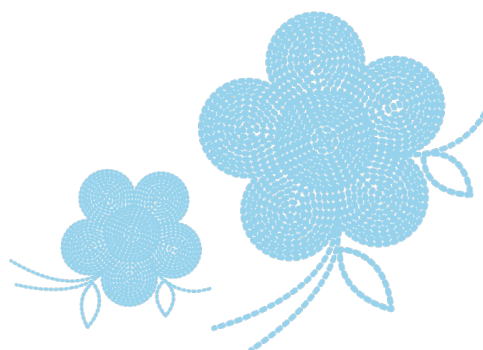
This Gathering is a public event where photography, audio and video recording may occur. By attending the event, all attendees consent to the potential release and publication of photos and audio/video recordings by the Office of the Special Interlocutor. If you have concerns about this, please speak with a staff member from the Office of the Special Interlocutor.

## Monday, November 28th

Time	Event	Location
7:00 am	<b>Lighting of Sacred Fire</b> York Avenue Entrance of Convention Centre	Winnipeg Convention Centre
12:00 pm	<b>Registration Opens</b> <b>Welcome bags and “grab and go” lunch provided</b> <b>Selections for Workshop Sessions and Discussion Circles</b>	Main Level Convention Centre
5:00 pm	<b>Welcome Ceremony</b> <b>Masters of Ceremony – Kimberly Murray and Stephanie Scott</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sons of the Drum</li><li>• Empty Chair Ceremony</li><li>• Bentwood Box</li></ul>	Main Level Convention Centre
6:00 pm	<b>Welcome Dinner</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Mary Nirlungayuk</b>, Lighting of Qulliq</li><li>• <b>Elder Florence Paynter</b>, Opening Prayer and Spirit Dish Offering</li><li>• Memorial Cloth Embraces the Gathering</li></ul> <b>Welcome to the Territory</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Grand Chief Cathy Merrick</b>, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs</li><li>• <b>Minister Andrew Carrier</b>, Manitoba Métis Federation, National Government of the Red River Métis</li><li>• <b>His Worship Mayor Scott Gillingham</b>, City of Winnipeg</li></ul> <b>Keynote Address</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>The Honourable Justice Murray Sinclair</b></li></ul> <b>Artistic Performance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Rhonda Head</b>, Mezzo-Soprano Vocalist</li></ul> <b>Elder Florence Paynter, Closing Prayer</b>	Main Level Convention Centre

## AM Tuesday, November 29th

Time	Event	Location
6:15 am	<b>Lighting of Sacred Fire by 'Oskapwis'</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No ceremonies at Sacred Fire site, offerings of medicines can be made</li> </ul>	York Avenue entrance
6:30 am	<b>Elder Charlie Nelson</b> , Pipe Ceremony <b>Elder Florence Paynter</b> , Water Ceremony	Plenary Room
7:30 am	<b>Breakfast Provided</b>	Plenary Room
8:30 am	<b>Hand Drum Song</b> <b>Elder Invocation</b>	Plenary Room
8:45 am	<b>Conference Co-Chairs – Albert Beck and Lisa Meeches</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call to Order</li> </ul>	Plenary Room
9:00 am	<b>Voices of Survivors: Addressing Trauma in the Search and Recovery of Missing Children</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Esther Sanderson</b>, Opaskweyak Cree Nation, MB</li> <li><b>Levinia Brown</b>, Rankin Inlet, NU</li> <li><b>Andrew Carrier</b>, Winnipeg, MB</li> </ul>	Plenary Room
9:50 am	<b>Conference Opening Comments</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Kimberly Murray</b>, Independent Special Interlocutor</li> <li><b>Stephanie Scott</b>, Executive Director, National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation</li> </ul>	Plenary Room
10:00 am	<b>Wellness Break</b>	
10:15 am	<b>Keynote Address:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Dr. Cornelia (Nel) Wieman</b>, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, First Nations Health Authority, BC</li> </ul> <i>"Practising Trauma-Informed Mental Health and Wellness"</i>	Plenary Room
10:45 am	<b>Participant Dialogue &amp; Sharing</b>	Plenary Room
11:45 am	<b>Cultural Sharing: Ivan Flett Memorial Dancers and Grace Morgan</b>	Plenary Room
12:00 pm	<b>Lunch Provided</b>	Plenary Room





## PM Tuesday, November 29th

Time	Event	Location
1:00 pm	<b>Voices of Community – “Ensuring Community Well-Being in the Search and Recovery of Missing Children”</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eleanor Skead, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, ON</li> <li>• Chief Derek Nepinak (Niibin Makwa), Pine Creek First Nation, MB</li> <li>• Sherri Chisan, Blue Quills Indian Residential School, BC</li> </ul>	Plenary Room
2:30 pm – 4:30 pm	<b>Interactive Breakout Sessions led by the Office of the Independent Special Interlocutor</b>	
	<b>Session 1 – Recognizing the Different Types of Trauma</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presenter: Beverly Cook</li> <li>• Facilitator: Kirsten Manley-Casimir</li> </ul>	Room 4 East
	<b>Session 2 – Responding to Trauma and Grief Through Arts and Commemoration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presenter: D’Arcy Basil</li> <li>• Facilitator: Eva Wilson</li> </ul>	Room 4 West
	<b>Interactive Breakout Sessions led by the National Advisory Committee on Missing Children and Unmarked Burials</b>	
	<b>Session 3 – National Advisory Committee Panel: A panel will present case studies of specific communities carrying out searches and how they have addressed the challenges of sharing potentially triggering information and avoiding mis-reporting.</b> Trauma-informed communication practices to keep Survivors and communities informed about the search process and deal effectively with media inquiries. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderator: Crystal Fraser</li> <li>• Speakers: Marcella Fontaine, Sagkeeng First Nation, Jack Anawak, Nunavut, Leah Ballantyne, Mathias Colombe First Nation</li> </ul>	Room 1
	<b>Session 4 – Knowledge Sharing Circle - Good practices and lessons learned in caring for Survivors and families throughout the search process</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitator: Ruth Murdock</li> </ul>	Room 5
	<b>Session 5 – Knowledge Sharing Circle - Good practices and lessons learned in caring for our communities throughout the search process</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitator: Belinda Vanderbroek</li> </ul>	Room 6
	<b>Session 6 – Knowledge Sharing Circle - Good practices and lessons learned in caring for the frontline workers who lead and carry out searches</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitator: Janet Head</li> </ul>	Room 9
4:30 pm	<b>Return to Plenary and Breakout Session Highlights</b>	Plenary Room
4:50 pm	<b>Cultural Sharing, Hand Drum</b>	Plenary Room
4:55 pm	<b>Charlotte Nolin, Closing Prayer and Moment of Reflection</b>	Plenary Room
5:00 pm	<b>Adjournment</b>	Plenary Room



## AM Wednesday, November 30th

Time	Event	Location
6:15 am	<b>Lighting of Sacred Fire by 'Oskapwis'</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No ceremonies at Sacred Fire site, offerings of medicines can be made</li> </ul>	York Avenue Entrance
6:30 am	<b>Elder Charlie Nelson, Pipe Ceremony</b> <b>Elder Florence Paynter, Water Ceremony</b>	Plenary Room
7:30 am	<b>Breakfast Provided</b>	Plenary Room
8:30 am	<b>Hand Drum Song</b> <b>Elder Invocation</b>	Plenary Room
8:45 am	<b>Conference Co-Chairs Albert Beck and Lisa Meeches</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call to Order</li> </ul>	Plenary Room
9:00 am	<b>Voices of Survivor Families – Youth “Health and Wellness Supports Needed for Youth in the Search and Recovery for Missing Children”</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Diandre Thomas-Hart</b>, First Nation Youth, Winnipeg, MB</li> <li><b>Tracie Léost</b>, Red River Métis Youth</li> <li><b>Kaydon Laurin</b>, Inuk Youth, Whale Cove, NU</li> </ul>	Plenary Room
9:45 am	<b>Voices of Community – “Perpetuating Trauma and How to Address Trauma”</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Rebecca Blake</b> Inuvialuit Regional Corporation</li> <li><b>Jim “Jimmy D” Durocher</b>, Île-à-la-Crosse, SK</li> </ul>	Plenary Room
10:45 am	<b>Wellness Break</b>	
11:00 am	<b>Participant Dialogue &amp; Sharing</b>	Plenary Room
11:30 am	<b>Cultural Sharing: Inuit Artists, Nikki Komaksiutiksak and Carmello Swan</b>	Plenary Room
11:45 am	<b>Lunch Provided</b>	Plenary Room
12:45 pm	<b>Indigenous Physicians Panel: “Health and Healing in the Search and Recovery of Missing Children”</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Dr. James Makokis</b>, Kehewin Health Centre, (AB)</li> <li><b>Dr. Barry Lavallee</b>, CEO, Keewatinohk Inniniw Minoayawin (MB)</li> <li><b>Dr. Marcia Anderson</b>, Vice-Dean Indigenous Health, Social Justice and Anti-Racism: Rady Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Manitoba</li> </ul>	Plenary Room
1:30 pm	<b>Participant Dialogue &amp; Sharing</b>	Plenary Room
2:15 pm	<b>Wellness Break</b>	



## PM Wednesday, November 30th

Time	Event	Location
2:30 pm – 4:30 pm	<b>Interactive Breakout Sessions led by the Office of the Independent Special Interlocutor</b>	
	<b>Session 1 – Understanding Ambiguous Loss</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presenter: Brenda Reynolds</li> <li>Facilitator: Marlene Orr</li> </ul>	Room 4 East
	<b>Session 2 – Responding to Trauma and Grief: The Importance of Ceremonies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presenter: Wendy Hill</li> <li>Facilitator: Dr. Niigaanwewidam (Niigaan) Sinclair</li> </ul>	Room 4 West
	<b>Session 3 – Osborne Family Presentation: “Pimicikamak: Sharing a Journey of Healing”</b> <p>A. Seeking and Finding Missing Children: The Search of the Osborne Girls: A 70-Year Journey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presenters: Betsy Osborne, William Osborne, and Jackson Osborne</li> </ul> <p>B. Honouring our Survivors: A Memorial Monument Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presenters: Architect David Thomas and Group</li> </ul> <p>C -The Filming of Betty Ross: A Story of Resilience, Healing and Teachings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presenters: Betty Ross and Eppo Eerkes</li> </ul>	Room 2F
	<b>Interactive Breakout Sessions led by the National Advisory Committee on Missing Children and Unmarked Burials</b>	
	<b>Session 4 - A panel of experts experienced in applying trauma informed and culturally safe approaches to statement gathering and other research in support of community search efforts.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderator: Celeste McKay</li> <li>Presenters: Beverly Jacobs, David Aglukark, Kaila Johnston</li> </ul>	Room 3
	<b>Session 5 – Knowledge Sharing Circle - Good practices and lessons learned in caring for Survivors and families throughout the search process</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitator: Janet Head</li> </ul>	Room 5
	<b>Session 6 – Knowledge Sharing Circle - Good practices and lessons learned in caring for our communities throughout the search process</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitator: Vanessa Cook</li> </ul>	Room 6
	<b>Session 7 – Knowledge Sharing Circle - Good practices and lessons learned in caring for the frontline workers who lead and carry out searches</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitator: Belinda Vanderbroek</li> </ul>	Room 9
4:30 pm	<b>Return to Plenary and Break out Session Highlights</b>	Plenary Room
4:50 pm	<b>Closing Remarks: Kimberly Murray &amp; Stephanie Scott</b> <b>Video “Immutaa”</b>	Plenary Room
4:55 pm	<b>Elder, Closing Prayer</b>	Plenary Room
5:00 pm	<b>Travel Song, Sons of the Drum</b>	

## Protocols

There will be a Sacred Fire on-site at the Convention Centre which will remain lit daily for the duration of the Gathering. This Sacred Fire ensures that the Spirits and Teachings guide and protect us while we meet. Please help us respect the protocols of the Sacred Fire. The Firekeeper has been entrusted with tending to this flame and deserves the utmost respect.

## Health Supports

Health and wellness supports will be available throughout the Gathering. Supports include trauma informed Resolution Health Support Workers, Cultural Support Providers and Mental Health Supports. Due to the difficult content that will be discussed, participants are encouraged to access these supports as needed, at any time during the Gathering. There will be regular reminders and information about where and how to access support services.



# Speaker, Facilitator & Performer Biographies

## Conference Co-Chairs:



**Albert G.D. Beck**

Albert is a Red River Métis citizen from Crane River, Manitoba and the Director of the Sixties Scoop Department with the Manitoba Métis Federation. He has dedicated his life to Indigenous rights at the community, regional, national and international levels. His experience includes frontline client work, senior program and policy development, research, advisor/mentoring, public education, senior public administration, and printed publications. Albert's current work focuses on MMIWG2SLGBTQQIA+ National Action Plan implementation, 2SLGBTQQIA+, and Sixties Scoop issues and the search for Red River Métis Children who attended Residential and Day Schools. He is a consultant/facilitator and works to support capacity development for 2S organizations, 2S/HIV/ AIDS education and curriculum development. Albert lives in Ottawa, Ontario, with his husband, Dr.J. Craig Phillips.



**Lisa Meeches  
(O.C., O.M.)**

Lisa Meeches is a proud Anishinaabe from Treaty One Territory. Lisa is well known for producing and hosting The Sharing Circle (1991 – 2008). Since then, Lisa has produced many acclaimed television series and films. Notable among these are Tipi Tales, We Were Children, Elijah, Taken, and Buffy Sainte-Marie: Carry It On. Lisa is also the Executive Director of the Manito Ahbee Festival. Under her influence, MAF has grown to become a cultural institution. Meeting the obligations to the sacred site and honoring the spirit of the drum are the only rewards Lisa will accept. For both her professional accomplishments and for her community service, Lisa was honored with investitures into the Order of Canada and Order of Manitoba. Lisa grew up on Anishinaabe protocol and ceremony and continues to pass this knowledge on to her daughter Stevie. In addition to extended family, Lisa has the love and support of many, many adopted family members within her powwow and ceremony circles.

## Keynote Speakers:



**The Honourable  
Murray Sinclair CC, MSC**

The Honourable Murray Sinclair was born just north of Selkirk, Manitoba, at what used to be St. Peters Reserve. His Ojibway name Mizanay Gheezhik, means "the One Who Speaks of Pictures in the Sky," and Sinclair has spent his life creating a new image of justice for Aboriginal people. He graduated from law school in 1979. He has been involved with the justice system in Manitoba for over 40 years, as a lawyer representing Indigenous clients, as an Adjunct Professor of Law at Robson Hall, as Associate Chief Judge of Manitoba's Provincial Court and as a Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench. He was the first Indigenous Judge appointed in Manitoba and Canada's second. He served as Co-Chair of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry of Manitoba and as Chief Commissioner of Canada's Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission. He retired from the Bench and was appointed to the Senate in 2016. After retiring from the Senate in early 2021, he returned to the practice of law and mentoring young lawyers at Cochrane Saxberg LLP. He is currently writing his memoir.



**Dr. Cornelia (Nel) Wieman,  
MSc, MD, FRCPC**

Dr. Nel Wieman is the Deputy Chief Medical Officer for the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) in British Columbia. She is Anishinaabe (Little Grand Rapids First Nation, Manitoba) and lives, works and plays on the unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples – the sə́lilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh), Sḵwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nations. She completed her medical degree and psychiatry specialty training at McMaster University. Canada's first female Indigenous psychiatrist, Dr. Wieman has more than 20 years' clinical experience, working with Indigenous people in both rural/reserve and urban settings. Dr. Wieman served as the President of the Indigenous Physicians Association of Canada (IPAC) from 2016 - 2022.

## Program Speakers



### Mr. Andrew Carrier, BA, RPT, CHRP

Vice-President – Winnipeg Region & the Minister responsible for:

- Métis Community Liaison Department
- Michif Languages
- French Language Services
- Riel House
- Métis Residential, Day School Survivors
- Associate Minister of Economic Development
- Associate Minister Métis Heritage Trust Fund

Andrew has a Bachelor of Arts degree, a Business Administration Diploma. He is a Registered Professional Trainer and a Certified Human Resource Practitioner.

Andrew completed 30 years of service with the Province of Manitoba and is currently serving his seventh term in office with the Manitoba Métis Federation.

Andrew has served the Manitoba Métis Federation for the past 22 years as a Regional Director and was re-elected Vice-President for the Winnipeg Region in May 2022.

Additionally, Andrew is the Chairperson for The Indigenous Leadership Development Institute, overseeing the World Indigenous Business Forum – Bogota, Colombia – 2022 and is the Métis representative on The Truth and Reconciliation – Governing Circle.



### Belinda Vandenbroeck

Belinda is 74 years old and from Opaskwayak Cree Nation, Big Eddy Reserve. She entered residential school in 1957. Belinda has been sober for 47 years and hosts the annual event, Honoring Our Sobriety for 14 years. In 1993, at age 45, Belinda received her Bachelor of Arts in Native Studies and Psychology. Her passion today is to help people in their healing journey. She has facilitated 7 day women's retreats, workshops, Belinda speaks at various venues sharing her knowledge and personal experience at a residential school. She speaks about colonization and impacts on the lives of Indigenous people. She has attended and presented at the Healing our Spirit Worldwide and other conferences. She sat on the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority for 5 years and on the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba for 2 years. She is a part of the Clan Mothers Healing Village and Knowledge Centre. She is retired but remains involved in community events, workshops and traditional ceremonies.



### Beverly Kiohawiton Cook

Beverly is a Family Nurse Practitioner and is a prominent voice in the mind-body medicine approach to restoring wellness, reproductive health and environmental justice for the Akwesasne Mohawk people. Chief Cook is embarking on her fourth consecutive term as an elected Chief on the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council. Chief Cook represents the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe on the United Southern and Eastern Tribes Board of Directors. She is also a member of the National Indian Health Board (NIHB), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Technical Tribal Advisory Committee (SAMHSA TTAC) representing the Nashville Area that includes Tribes/Nations in New York State.

At home, she is a former member of the Three Sister's Advisory Board and championed the Akwesasne Child Advocacy Center that provides victim-centered care for abused children. Chief Cook remains a valued supporter of the Tribe's Summit committee (formerly the Child Safe Summit Committee).



### **Grand Chief Cathy Merrick, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs**

Tansi my name is Kameekosit Ispokanee Iskwew, Cathy Merrick and Treaty to the Cross Lake Band of Indians. I was born and raised in Cross Lake MB. My husband is from the Sioux Valley Dakota Nation. Me and my husband of 30 years have 3 sons and 7 kootitims and our family continues to grow with Creator's Blessings.

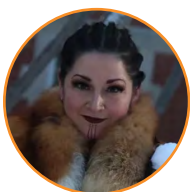
I originate from the Cross Lake Band of Indians, the largest First Nation in the MKO Region with a total population of 10,000 plus people. Of the total population, 8,500 people live On-Reserve. I have served the people of Cross Lake diligently for 12 years as a Councillor and 5 years as Chief up until 2018. As Chief I was the Principal Spokesperson of the Nation, Primary Intergovernmental Affairs, Government Relations, International Relations (Tribal, Federal, Provincial, Municipal, Inherent and Treaty Rights) under Pimicikamak. At present I am working in the capacity of the Health Advisor to the Cross Lake Band of Indians and am fortunate to carry out some of our major Health Projects to date. I bring to you a wealth of knowledge in Indigenous Politics, more importantly from the grassroots level, from the voice and the hearts of our people.



### **Brenda Reynolds, BISW, RSW, Master of Arts Counseling Psychology, CIYT 200**

Brenda Reynolds is Saulteaux and grew up on Fishing Lake First Nation, Saskatchewan. After completing her Bachelor of Indian Social Work, she worked at Gordon's Indian Residential School providing counseling services and educating students about abuse. Near the end of the school year, June 1988, 17 girls disclosed that they were being sexually abused by a staff member. These disclosures led to the first litigated case of sexual abuse involving an IRS staff member in Canada. The litigation led to the 2007 Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement – the largest class action settlement in Canada.

Brenda is a highly respected educator on the history and impacts of Indian Residential Schools and related trauma-informed health care; she received her Masters in Counselling Psychology for her research on the intergenerational trauma suffered by family members of former Indian residential school students. This led to her development of the Indian Residential School Resolution Health Support program under the Indian Residential Settlement Agreement. In addition to her many professional contributions, Brenda is an avid distance runner having completed 24 marathons including the Boston Marathon and a Certified Indigenous Yoga Teacher.



### **Dr. Crystal Gail Fraser**

Dr. Fraser is Gwichyà Gwich'in and originally from Inuvik and Dachan Choo Gèhnjik in the Northwest Territories. Her PhD research focused on the history of student experiences at Indian Residential Schools in the Inuvik Region between 1959 and 1996. Crystal's work makes a strong contribution to how scholars engage with Indigenous research methodologies and theoretical concepts, our understanding of Indigenous histories during the second half of the twentieth century, and how northern Canada was unique in relation to the rest of the settler nation. Dr. Crystal Fraser was awarded the 2020 John Bullen Prize by the Canadian Historical Association for her thesis, titled T'aih k'ighe' tt'h'aih zhit diidich'ùh or By Strength We Are Still Here. The prize honours the outstanding PhD thesis on a historical topic submitted in a Canadian university.



### **D'Arcy Basil**

D'Arcy Basil is a Secwepemc / Coast Salish (adopted) artist living on the unceded Musqueam traditional territory. He has a background in sculpting, stone carving and wood carving. His carvings and sculptures in wood, stone, and metal have been collected both locally and internationally.

Mr. Basil attended the digital graphic design / 3D animation programs at Capilano University and BCIT and apprenticed with Master Carver Chris Sparrow (Musqueam). Turning his focus to jade carving, he continues to prioritise mentorship, building relationships, and working in collaboration with many other artists throughout BC, Canada and internationally.





### **Niibin Makwa- Summer Bear - Derek J. Nepinak, LLB, BA(Hons)**

Derek Nepinak is the Chief of the Minegoziibe Anishinabe and former Grand Chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (2011-2017), & former Chief of the Pine Creek First Nation (2008-2012). Derek holds a law degree from the college of law, University of Saskatchewan & the Osgoode Hall Law School intensive program in Indigenous Lands, Resources & Governance. Derek also holds a bachelor of Arts in Native Studies with Honours from the University of Alberta. Derek is Anishinabe with ancestry to Treaty 2 as well as Treaty 4 & is the first generation of his family to not be forced into residential or day school in 100 years.

Derek dedicates his work to the wellbeing of his four children Rebecca, Keewatin, Meadow & Nibikwe, his broader family & the community of the Minegoziibe Anishinabe.



### **Diandre Thomas-Hart**

Diandre a proud Cree-Ojibway woman from Winnipeg, MB was raised within the urban inner-city of Winnipeg's north end neighborhood. Currently a contract worker and facilitator in training for the Indigenous Leadership Development Institute Inc., Diandre is the youngest member of the City of Winnipeg's Mayor's Indigenous Advisory Circle since it's creation in 2016; she is a board member and secretary at the Urban Indigenous Theatre Company (dissolved) and a graduate (2018) of the National Screen Institute's CBC New Indigenous Voices program because of her passion for community, film and theatre. Recently, (2020) became a new mother and aims to reclaim cultural identity within her new family.

Excited to take on any endeavor that promotes cultural reclamation and leadership, she hopes to uplift the youth voice in her new role for SCO's Youth Council.

"Diandre has had all the socio-economic determinants and barriers that every young Indigenous women face: family break-up, poverty, inadequate housing, family history of abuse, addiction, violence, peer pressure and has always decided never to allow any of these barriers to defeat her."  
– Randy Way, nominator for the Future Leaders of Manitoba award 2017



### **Eleanor Skead**

Eleanor is an Anishinaabe woman of the Sturgeon Clan, an Elder of Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, and a Survivor of the St. Mary's (Kenora) Indian Residential School. She is also a trained facilitator and Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe language) teacher and is completing a Masters in Education from Queens University. Eleanor is the facilitator of the Kaatagoging initiative, which is being led by 51 Survivors in Wauzhushk Onigum to uncover the truth about St. Mary's, protect unmarked graves, and establish a healing path forward.



### **Esther Sanderson, B.Ed. M.Ed.**

Esther Sanderson is a member of the Opaskwayak Cree Nation (OCN), Treaty 5 Territory. She is a member of the Beaver Clan. She comes from a large family of 16 siblings most of whom were taken and sent to various residential schools. Despite spending years at residential schools all are still Cree speakers. Her and her twin sister were only three, when they were taken to residential school, barely able to speak any language, but they learned Cree during holiday times at home. The schools could not erase the language in her family even in the face of harsh punishments they endured. Like all other families, her family suffered intergenerational trauma caused by residential school experiences. Her family experienced low self-esteem, addictions, suicide, incarceration, and family break ups which had devastating impacts on the overall wellness of her family.

She is a grateful mother of two wise children and a proud kookum to four precious grandchildren. She sees hope for the future and light emerging from her children and grandchildren. She is now a retired educator of 35 years; her main interest has been in the area of Cree language education.



### **Eva Wilson-Fontaine**

Eva is a member of the Peguis First Nation located on Treaty 1 territory. She is a dedicated mother and Kookum (grandmother), and her compassion and love have lent itself to her professional life. Eva's passion is working with Indigenous people, specifically in social services, and training and employment. She is currently the Executive Director for ANISH Corporation, which she co-founded with her husband, EJ Fontaine, along with AMIK™ Inc. Since the late 1985's she has worked with numerous organizations that provide support services to survivors, their families, and communities affected by Canada's Indian residential school system and 60' Scoop era.

Eva is dedicated to her community, serving as a Trustee of the Helen Betty Osborne Memorial Foundation, Co-Chair for the Women as Career Mentor Gala Dinner Event, and a former board member to Ikwe Widdjiitiwin Women's Shelter and Manitoba First Nation Wellness Advisory Committee. Currently, she sits as a voluntary member of the Assembly of First Nations Mental Wellness Advisory Committee and Board Member of Kekinan Centre Inc. and Manitoba Law Society Indigenous Advisory Committee.



### **Elder Florence Paynter**

Florence Paynter is one of the Elders-in-Residence at the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation where she is available for personal, cultural and spiritual guidance. Florence was a Coordinator of Research and Development for the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre. Her education career began in 1973 and has had experience being a classroom teacher, an Aboriginal education consultant for the provincial education system for 20 years. Some of Florence's accomplishments include having the Aboriginal languages recognized for high school credit and being involved in some key projects where there was inclusion of the Aboriginal content in curricular areas. Florence is from the Sandy Bay First Nation and holds a membership from the Norway House band. She has A Master's of Education degree from the University of Manitoba and Florence is a Second Degree Mide Woman. She speaks her language fluently and is a residential school survivor.



### **Dr. Elder Harry Bone**

Member of Keeseekoowenin Ojibway Nation where he served as a Chief and Director of Education, Elder Harry Bone has worked tirelessly throughout his life to bolster Indigenous rights. While a graduate student at the University of Manitoba, he was a Student Advisor and Lecturer. Elder Bone worked as a CEO at the West Region Tribal Council, as a Director of the Manitoba Indian Education Authority, as Director of Native Programs for the Federal Government and as a Vice-President of Aboriginal Cultural Centres of Canada. Elder Bone's expertise in First Nations governance at all levels of government is well regarded. His delegations have been instrumental in furthering many projects for the benefit of all Manitobans as well as Indigenous communities across Canada. By and large, Elder Harry Bone is recognized for his tireless and trendsetting work that continues to advance Aboriginal education in Canada.



### **Ivan Flett Memorial Dancers**

Ivan Flett Memorial Dancers are three siblings from Winnipeg, Manitoba who share a passion for dance, not just any dance it's all about the Red River Jig!

Michael, Jacob and Cieanna Harris began dancing at the young age of five years old. Today they are 22, 20 and 18 yrs old. Today they are joined by their younger siblings Liam age 10 and Savannah age 8.

They perform traditional dances of the Red River Jig mixed with modern dancing known as the hip hop jig. Through their gift of dance they have had great opportunities to travel the world and they hold numerous achievements and awards.

Their main focus is to attract youth through the rhythm and style of the hip hop jig. They hope to motivate and inspire people of all ages, and bring awareness that their culture is going strong and continues to be ambitious with this dance and music.



### **Dr. James A. Makokis**

Dr. Makokis is a Nehiyô (Plains Cree) Family Physician from the Saddle Lake Cree Nation in northeastern Alberta and the recent winner of Season 7 of “The Amazing Race Canada” with his husband Anthony Johnson as “Team Ahkameyimok” (“Never give up” in the Plains Cree language). Dr. James Makokis leads one of North America’s most progressive family medical clinics serving both LGBTQ2S and First Nation peoples from all over Canada. Dr. James Makokis is a national and internationally recognized leader and author in the area of Indigenous health and transgender health. Recently named to “The Medical Post’s 2021 Power List,” Dr. Makokis believes that power should be shared, especially with those who have been disempowered. His philosophy of leadership is based on Nehiyô iyintiw wiyasiwewina (Cree Natural Laws) including kisewatisiwin (kindness), kwayask itatisiwin (honesty), sohkeyitamowin (strength/determination), and pahkwenamatowin (sharing) as taught to him by his Elders.



### **Janet Head**

My name is Janet Head, I am from Opaskwayak Cree Nation. I am a proud single mother of a 23 year old daughter. My late parents names John A. Head and Hagar Head, both Residential School Survivors. My Grandparents attended McKay School – Fisher Island. I am a second generation Intergenerational Residential Survivor. I worked with Residential School survivors as a support person for 10 years. University College of the North has invited me the last 4 years to speak on Intergenerational Residential School impacts to the students and faculty. I am a Focus Oriented in Trauma therapist– I graduated September 2017. Currently working on my designation in psychotherapy.



### **Jim “Jimmy D” Durocher**

Jimmy D is a Red River Métis Veteran and Elder. Born and raised in Île-à-la-Crosse, the 82-year-old is a survivor of the Île-à-la-Crosse residential and day school, having spent nine years attending the facility. Despite his negative experiences at the day school, he has remained an active member of St John the Baptist Catholic Church, where he attends services every Sunday, playing guitar and singing in praise. He hopes the Holy Father, as the head of the Catholic Church, will hear and understand the importance of coming to Canada to personally deliver an apology to the Indigenous peoples for the atrocities committed by clergy, and for the children found in unmarked graves. He lost his wife Leona six years ago, following a three-year battle with cancer. Over their fifty-plus year marriage, they had seven children and today have 10 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.



### **Kaydon Laurin**

Kaydon is French and a registered Inuk of the Nunavut Agreement (Whale Cove, NU). He is a great grandson of John and Frances Voisey and a son of Corrin Rosnow and Don Laurin. He is a proud urban Inuk and studies Environmental Sciences at the University of Winnipeg. Prior to being elected to the board of directors at the Manitoba Inuit Association, he helped lead the emergency COVID-19 hamper program. Kaydon has sat on the province's Student Advisory Council and Provincial Curriculum Advisory Panel. He was one of the youth ambassadors this past summer for the Gord Downie and Chanie Wenjack Fund. Kaydon believes that space needs to be created for communities to heal from trauma through traditional Indigenous approaches, including within the healthcare system."



### **Leah Ballantyne**

Leah Ballantyne, LLB, LLM is from the Mathias Colomb Cree Nation in Pukatawagan, Manitoba, Treaty Six Confederacy. Leah is a member of the 60s scoop class. In 2005 she became the only member of her community to become a lawyer. Leah earned her Masters-in-law degree in international law and governance in 2017 from the University of Hawaii Manoa School of Law. Ms. Ballantyne serves grassroots leaders, Chiefs and other First Nation-led organizations in upholding Treaty and Inherent rights; she provides her expertise to a C-92 Child Welfare Law reform project toward restitution for residential school survivors through the location, memorialization and commemoration of mass and unmarked graves. Many members of the Mathias Colomb Band members attended Guy Hill and Sturgeon Landing schools and did not make it home. It is the goal of the community to name each and every child to commemorate and “bring the children home.”



### **Levinia Brown**

Levinia Brown is an Inuk Survivor from Rankin Inlet. In 1978, she received her certification as a Northwest Territories Classroom Assistant and in 1980 she became the first chairperson of the Keewatin Regional Education Authority. After serving as an information officer, chairperson of the local housing authority, and deputy mayor, Levinia became the first woman mayor of Rankin Inlet. Levinia was also Elected Member for Rankin Inlet South/Whale Cove. On February 16, 2004, Levinia was selected by MLAs to sit on the Executive Council and was soon named Deputy Premier. Dedicating her life to the development and promotion of community capacity building for health and social services, she projects a positive outlook on life. Her belief that life is a precious opportunity that should not be wasted is clearly expressed in her thirst for education, strength in leadership, and compassion for social issues. Levinia is married to Ron Brown. Together, they have 7 children and 3 custom adopted children.



### **Marcella Fontaine**

Marcella is a member of the Sagkeeng First Nation. She holds a PHD in Business, and is currently the IRS Coordinator for the “Fort Alexander Residential School – Ground Search”. With over 30 years of experience, Marcella has worked as a Professor, Consultant for First Nations and Senior Business Analyst. Marcella has extensive working experience in economic development, education, language and culture, strategic planning, community planning and working with various industry sectors. Marcella volunteers her time and sits on a few boards that provide services to families, individuals and communities dealing with addiction, harm reduction and trauma. She has completed Action Plans for industry on the MMIW2S issue and has and continues to conduct research on Residential Schools through interviews with elders and survivors of Sagkeeng and First Nations who attended the Fort Alexander Indian Residential School. Marcella is a mother to three daughters, grandmother to eight.



### **Dr. Marcia Anderson**

Dr. Anderson is Cree-Anishinaabe and grew up in the North End of Winnipeg. Her family roots go to Peguis First Nation and Norway House Cree Nation in Manitoba. She practices both Internal Medicine and Public Health as a Medical Officer of Health with Indigenous Services Canada-Manitoba Region. She is the Vice-Dean, Indigenous Health, Social Justice and Anti-Racism and the Executive Director of Indigenous Academic Affairs in the Ongomiiwin Indigenous Institute of Health and Healing, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Manitoba. She serves as the Chair of the Indigenous Health Network of the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada and the Chair of the National Consortium for Indigenous Medical Education. She was recognized for her contributions to Indigenous Peoples health with a National Aboriginal Achievement Award in March 2011. In 2018 she was named one of the 100 most powerful women in Canada by the Women's Executive Network. In 2021 she received the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons Dr. Thomas Dignan Indigenous Health Award, and in 2022 was named the Doctors Manitoba Physician of the Year.



### **Marlene Orr**

Marlene Orr is the Chief Operating Officer and Director of Corrections for Native Counselling Services of Alberta (NCSA). She serves as the Chair of the Public Security Indigenous Advisory Committee for the Province of Alberta and sits on the Chairperson's National Indigenous Circle for the Parole Board of Canada. Her many years of chairing Trauma Informed Edmonton and working in the inner city of Edmonton has grown her understanding of historical trauma and trauma-based behaviours. Her entire career, Marlene has worked to provide healing opportunities for Indigenous people in Alberta. Working in corrections, employment and training, supportive living, and the justice system; Marlene has always leveraged her connection to Indigenous communities and families to maximize her ability to help people heal. Although her education is in business; her traditional teachings have worked hand in hand with her experience in community to make change. Marlene has dedicated her life to helping her people.



### **Mary Nirlungayuk**

Mary grew up in the remote community of Kugaaruk, Nunavut in the Central Arctic, which has a population of 1100 people. In 1982, Mary joined the Co-operative System in the Arctic as the Office Manager of Koomiut Co-op in Kugaaruk, Nunavut, now lives in Winnipeg.

Mary holds the position of Corporate Secretary with Arctic Co-operatives Limited, the co-operative service federation of 33 co-ops in the Arctic. As the Vice President of the Corporate Services Division, she administers the democratic structure of Arctic Co-ops and works closely with the Board of Directors of Arctic Co-operatives Limited.

Mary has contributed to Co-operatives on local, regional, national and international level. She advocates for and educates others about the power of the Co-operative model. Mary plays a significant role in bringing insight on Inuit culture, values and perspective to the organization. Mary has two daughters Stephanie and Victoria.



### **Morgan Grace**

Morgan is a 16 year old youth fiddler from east Selkirk who has been playing since the age of 4. She is Coming off a very busy summer playing many festivals and other significant events including the Manitoba Country Awards. This year she also launched her first self titled CD. Morgans style originates from the vast amount of amazing fiddle teachers and fiddle players she has been fortunate to be around.



### **Nikki Komaksiutiksak**

Nikki Komaksiutiksak is an Inuit woman from Chesterfield Inlet, Nunavut. Nikki is the Executive Director to Tunngasugit, Western Canada's first Inuit Resource Centre located in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Though Winnipeg is now her home, Nikki has found the strength to preserve her "Inukness" living in the southern part of Canada. Nikki is an active member with the Inuit community in Winnipeg, and uses her knowledge and understanding of the south to assist other Inuit moving to the big city.

Nikki is an inspiration to the young and old everywhere, and truly demonstrates a passion for her cultural identity. Nikki is an experienced throat singer, teacher of Inuit history and culture, and a heartfelt musical performer. Nikki has participated in a number of international events, representing Manitoba and Inuit at such prestigious venues as the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Summer Games and more current the 2015 Indigenous Music Awards in Winnipeg. She has recorded music with local Canadian talent, including such names as, the Weakerthans, Demetra Penner and Moses Mayes.

Nikki has been featured in many events around the world, always sharing her identity and teaching about her Canadian Inuit Culture. Nikki is often asked to attend Universities and schools throughout Manitoba to teach and showcase Inuit culture to both students and staff. The Inuit of Canada are an integral part of Canadian history and culture, but sadly are often excluded, overlooked, and forgotten. Nikki truly believes that it is critical that Inuit culture is remembered, recognized and celebrated throughout all of Canada.



Alongside Nikki is her daughter Caramello Swan, 18 years old and walks two cultures her Inuit identity as well as her Ojibway Identity. Caramello is a graduated student from Windsor Park Collegiate and is now Tunngasugit's first Youth worker, working to assist urban Inuit Youth reclaim their identity as well to advocate and serve urban Inuit youth in Winnipeg.



### **Dr. Niigaanwewidam (Niigaan) Sinclair**

Niigaan wewidam James Sinclair is Anishinaabe (St. Peter's/Little Peguis) and an Assistant Professor at the University of Manitoba. He is a regular commentator on Indigenous issues on CTV, CBC, and APTN, and his written work can be found in the pages of The Exile Edition of Native Canadian Fiction and Drama, newspapers like The Guardian, and online with CBC Books: Canada Writes. Niigaan is the co-editor of the award-winning Manitowapow: Aboriginal Writings from the Land of Water (Highwater Press, 2011) and Centering Anishinaabeg Studies: Understanding the World Through Stories (Michigan State University Press, 2013), and is the Editorial Director of The Debwe Series with Portage and Main Press.

Niigaan obtained his BA in Education at the University of Winnipeg, before completing an MA in Native- and African-American literatures at the University of Oklahoma, and a PhD in First Nations and American Literatures from the University of British Columbia.



### **Elder Jackson Osborne**

Elder Jackson Osborne is a member of the Pimicikamak Cree Nation (Cross Lake, Manitoba). He is a proud father and grandfather. Jackson is known regionally for his strong advocacy of Indigenous and Pimicikamak rights. Through his video and still pictures, he has brought to light all the shoreline damages the Jenpeg hydro dam has inflicted on Pimicikamak territory. He is currently an elder advisor for Pimicikamak regarding matters related to the Northern Flood Agreement (1977), which has Canada, Manitoba, and Manitoba Hydro as signatories. Jackson is a fluent Cree speaker.



### **Elder Betsy Oniske**

Elder Betsy Oniske (nee Osborne) is a member of the Pimicikamak Cree Nation (Cross Lake, Manitoba). She is a proud mother and grandmother. Betsy currently works for the Nelson House Cree Nation as a group home support worker in Thompson, Manitoba. Previously, she worked at the Whiskyjack Treatment Center for the Norway House Cree Nation as support worker. She has been busy as a foster care mother for the last 25 years. Betsy is a fluent Cree speaker.



### **Elder William Osborne**

Elder William Osborne is a member of the Pimicikamak Cree Nation (Cross Lake, Manitoba). He is a proud father and grandfather. William has worked for the Cross Lake Education Authority as teacher, vice principal and more recently, as counsellor for mature students. He was a councillor for several years. William is a knowledge keeper, traditional practitioner, medicine man, and a fluent Cree speaker.



### **Rebecca Blake**

My Name is Rebecca Blake, I am an Inuvialuit born in Inuvik, NT. During my younger years growing up I lived and went to School in many places across Canada including Yellowknife & Inuvik, NT, Whitehorse, Yukon, Edmonton & Calgary, Alberta, and Cross Lake & The Pas Manitoba. I have been the Mayor of Fort McPherson and the Chair of our Education Authority, I also served one term as the Chair of the Beaufort Delta Education Council. I am married to my husband Leslie J Blake and live in Fort McPherson, NT. We have three grown children Cameron, Morgan and Jocelyn and eight beautiful grandchildren. We own and operate our contracting company. In 2004 I became a lay leader in the Anglican Church; 10 years later in 2014 I was Ordained a Deacon.



### **Rhonda Head**

Rhonda is a multi award winning Mezzo Soprano from Opaskwayak Cree Nation , Manitoba, Canada. Rhonda is a twelve time International music award winner. She writes her lyrics in her Indigenous Cree Language and composes her melodies based off the landscape in her home reserve of Opaskwayak. She also received the 2022 LIT Talent Award for Best Collaboration- Kisahkihitiin (I Love You).



### **Ruth Murdock (Blue Rattle Woman)**

Ruth is a proud member of the Fisher River Cree Nation. She has a wealth of experience as an adult educator, guest speaker, curriculum writer and facilitator in holistic Indigenous training. Since 1985, Ruth has been facilitating Life Skills training, Life Skills Coach training and Trauma training across Manitoba and Turtle Island.

As a second-generation survivor of the residential school system, Ruth is committed to educating both Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members on the legacy of residential schools, the effects of colonization and the path to reclamation.

Some of the many communities, organizations, and companies she has had the honour of working with, include the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, Keeseekoowanan First Nation, Sagkeeng First Nation, Island Lake Child and Family Services, Community Education Development Association and Peguis First Nation.

It is Ruth's mission to help re-strengthen the next seven generations by breaking down barriers and shifting paradigms through empathy and compassion.



### **Sherri Chisan**

Sherri Chisan, ipkDoc, nehiyaw iskwew onicikiskwapiwinihk ohci, is serving as President at University nuhelot'jine thaiyots'j nistameyimâkanak Blue Quills (UnBQ). She also currently holds the role of Director of Research and is lead faculty in the Doctoral Program. She has a particular interest in Indigenous Research, and her commitment to Indigenous Knowledge and ceremony informs her work. Sherri holds a Doctoral Degree in iyiniw pimâtisiwin kiskeyihtamowin from UnBQ. She has an MA in Educational Leadership, a Bachelor of Management, and a Certificate in Business Administration. She has also worked with the Saddle Lake Cree Nation Education Authority as Associate Education Director, and with the Assembly of First Nations as researcher & policy analyst/ advisor and community liaison in Education, Languages, & Literacy.



### **Stephanie Scott**

Stephanie is the Executive Director of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. She was born and raised in Winnipeg, MB and her mother is from Roseau River Anishinaabe First Nation, Treaty 1 territory, she is also an intergenerational and sixties scoop survivor. Before accepting the role of Executive Director, she had spent 5 years with the NCTR as Director of Operations. She oversaw all budgeting and financial commitments of the NCTR, along with human resources activities and special project initiatives to educate all Canadians to advance reconciliation. Prior to joining the NCTR team, Stephanie worked with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) as the Manager of Statement Gathering; she was responsible for the gathering and documenting of almost 7000 audio and video recorded statements from Survivors, their families and those affected by residential schools in Canada. In addition to this role while at the TRC, Stephanie served as Executive Assistant to the Chair of the TRC where she learned invaluable leadership skills. Over the last 25 years, Stephanie has enjoyed a long and successful career operating her own television production business, which she still oversees part-time sharing the lives and history of Indigenous peoples for Canadians and abroad.





### **Tracie Léost**

Tracie is an award-winning young Métis leader, activist and athlete from St. Laurent, Manitoba, in Treaty 1 territory. Her strong commitment to contributing to social justice is evidenced by the philanthropic and awareness initiatives she has spearheaded. In 2018 Tracie received the Metis Youth Inspire Award, the highest honour bestowed upon the Indigenous community. In 2020 she was inducted into the Order of Gabriel Dumont Bronze Medal, the Metis Nations highest civilian honour. In 2020 Tracie founded Waanishka Movement Inc., a non-profit organization that supports Indigenous youth to rise. Tracie upholds her responsibilities as an emerging matriarch by serving her people and ensuring that all Indigenous youth have opportunities to grow and flourish. Through this work Tracie has been named one of Manitoba's most decorated Indigenous youth.



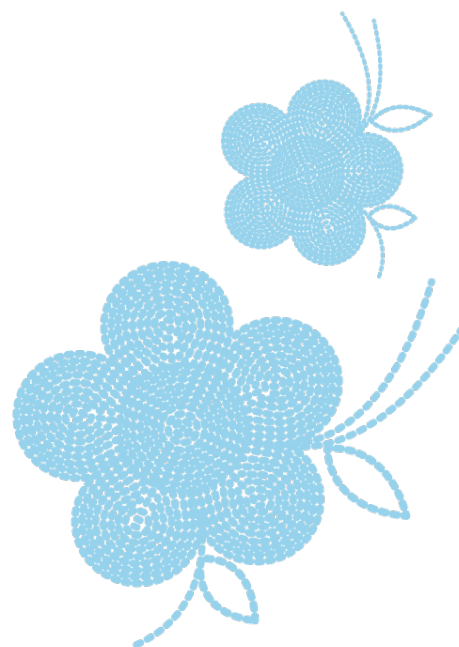
### **Vanessa Anakwudwabisayquay Cook**

Vanessa is from the Peguis First Nation and is Mikinaak/Doud Clan. A Cultural Support Provider at Wa-say Healing Centre, Vanessa serves Survivors of Indian Residential Schools, Indian Day Schools, Sixty's Scoop Survivors and the Families of Missing and Murdered Woman and Two Spirit People. Vanessa graduated from Children of the Earth High School, obtaining a First Nation Counselling Degree (Brandon University), her highest education comes from Sundance/Fasting ceremonies and time spent in nature with the very best teachers; the Elders, Medicine People and Family who grace her life. An Indigenous Sexual Health Facilitator, an Adult Educator with Righting Relations and a member of Red Tent which provides anti-oppression education, she has delivered thousands of workshops on decolonizing topics of mental health, substance use and relationships. Vanessa has aligned her heart and mind to work for The People. She is a Shkaabekwe (Helper) in all circles of her life, a Mother of two and Aunty to many.

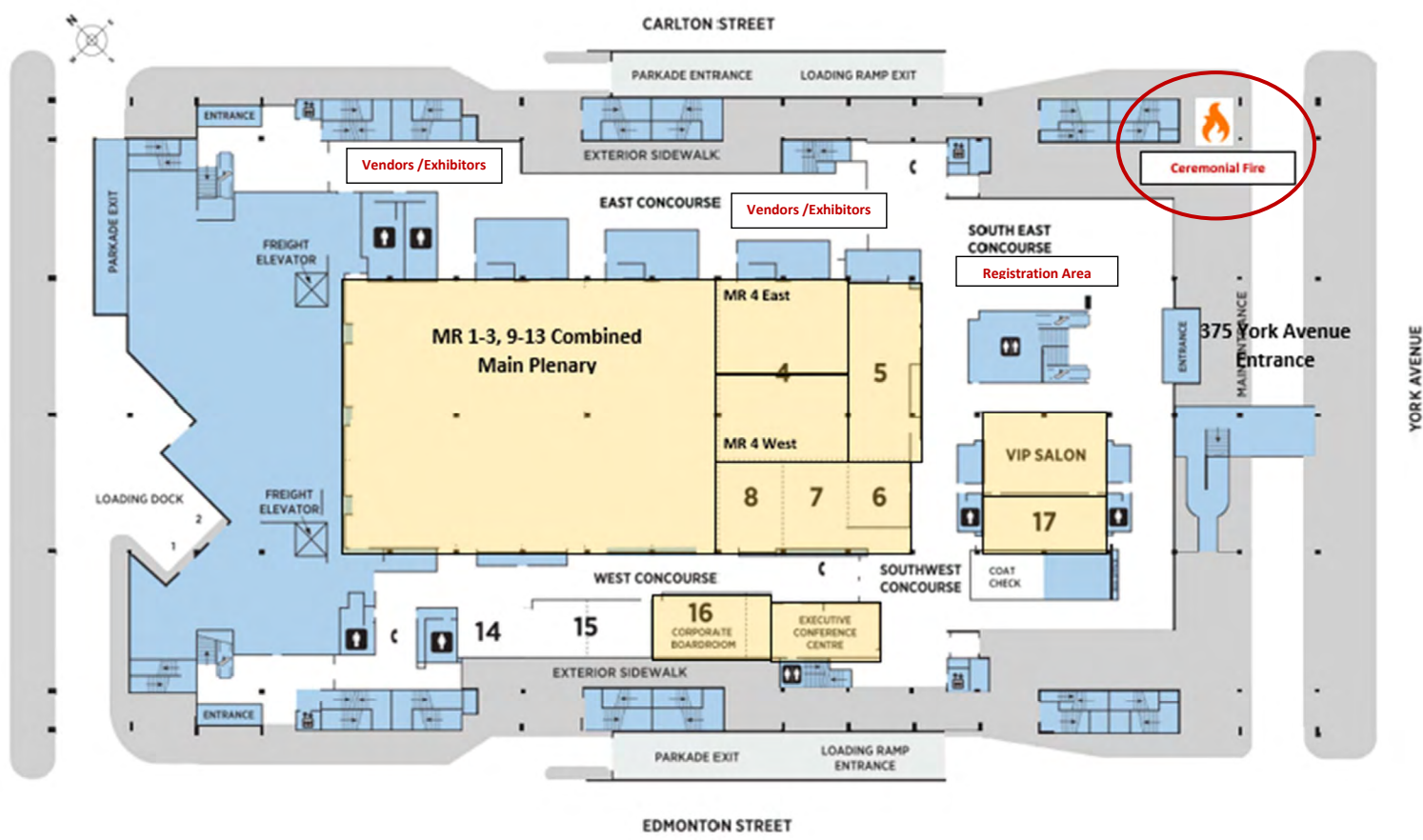


### **Wendy Hill**

Wendy Hill is from the Cayuga Nation which is one of the Six Nations/Longhouse people. Wendy's spiritual knowledge began as a child through her dreams and spiritual experiences. She was raised through her people's traditional ceremonies and continues her ancestors' spirituality. At twenty years old she had a near death experience and was given insight to her abilities as a healer. Today she works as a healer and peace-builder in many different Native communities in North America. She travels extensively motivating community wellness and healing, as well as awareness of the earth changes. She does hands-on healing for pain and illness, as well as emotional, mental and spiritual healing. Wendy continues to enlighten and share guidance, direction and healing wherever she goes.



# Map of Venue



Survivors & Elders Lounge	VIP Lounge
Health Supports and Healing Room	Room 17
NCTR Records and Archives Room	Executive Conference Centre
Event Information	Plenary Room Foyer
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	Plenary Room, Foyer

# Information Booths

The following organizations have set up booths in the East Concourse to provide information to attendees of the Gathering:

**Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada**

[Residential schools missing children - community support funding \(rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca\)](https://rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca)

**Indigenous Services Canada**

[Funding for Indigenous peoples - Canada.ca](https://Canada.ca)

**Indigenous Services Canada – Residential Schools, National Coordinator**

[Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada - Canada.ca](https://Canada.ca)

**FNIHB –**

[Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program \(sac-isc.gc.ca\)](https://sac-isc.gc.ca)  
[First Nations and Inuit health regional offices \(sac-isc.gc.ca\)](https://sac-isc.gc.ca)

**Manitoba Government - Indigenous Reconciliation and Northern Relations**

[Search | Province of Manitoba \(gov.mb.ca\)](https://gov.mb.ca)

**Mental Health & Wellness at First Nations Health Authority**

[First Nations Health Authority \(fnha.ca\)](https://fnha.ca)

**Anishinabek Nation**

[UNION OF ONTARIO INDIANS – Indian Residential Schools-translated \(anishinabek.ca\)](https://anishinabek.ca)

**Narratives Inc.**

<https://narrativesinc.com/>

**Lac Seul First Nations**

[Organization Profile – Lac Seul First Nation \(lacseulfn.org\)](https://lacseulfn.org)

**Nisoonag Partnership Initiative**

[Nisoonag Partnership: Bringing Home Our Children - Narratives Inc.](#)

**ISN Maskwa**

<https://www.isn-maskwa.com/>

# Acknowledgements

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Special thanks to Survivors, Indigenous Leaders and community members who are leading this Sacred work and traveled from near and far to attend this National Gathering. Thank you to the Pipe Carriers, Fire Keepers and Elders who have looked after us and the Sacred Fire for the duration of the Gathering.

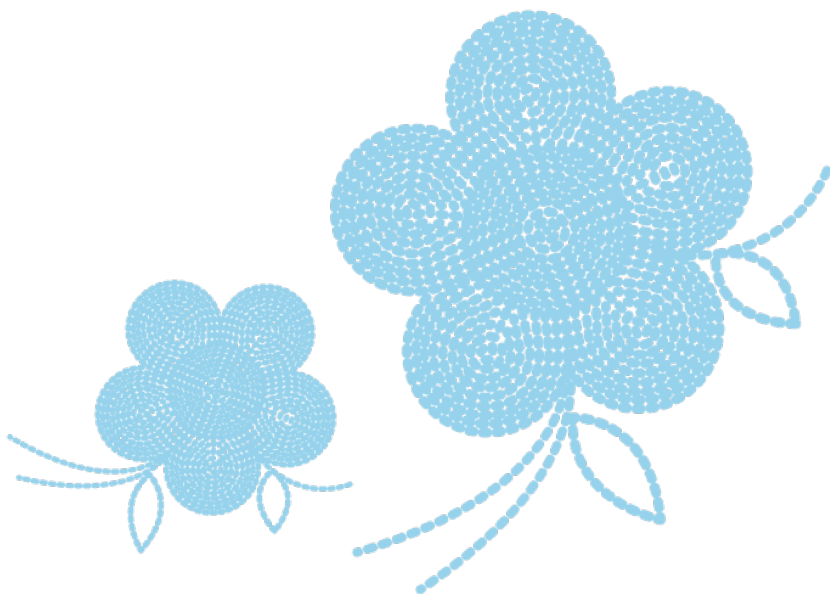
We would like to express our appreciation to all volunteers who contributed to the success of the National Gathering on Unmarked Burials: Addressing Trauma in the Search and Recovery of Missing Children.

We would like to express our appreciation for Albert Beck and Lisa Meeches for their dedication to helping the Office of the Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites associated with Indian Residential Schools, and for supporting the search and recovery of missing children. We would also like to thank the National Advisory Committee, National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

Thank you to the Resolution Health Support Network- Manitoba Region with a special thanks to Eva Wilson, Anish Corporation for the coordination of health and wellness supports.

For more information about the Office of the Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites associated with Indian Residential School, please visit our website at: <https://osi-bis.ca> or by email: [info@osi-bis.ca](mailto:info@osi-bis.ca)

For more information about the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation – Please visit our website at: <https://nctr.ca/> or by email: [nctr@umanitoba.ca](mailto:nctr@umanitoba.ca)



## Logo of the Office of the Special Interlocutor



Representing strength, family and healing, bears are the primary element in the Office of the Independent Special Interlocutor's logo. The larger bear represents the parent, family, and community, while the smaller bear symbolizes the children who were stolen and never returned.

The Northern Lights in the night sky are the Spirits of our ancestors dancing. The dancing guides the children to reunite with their ancestors.

The stars depict the connection between the children taken from their communities and the parents left behind, who would stare at the same stars longing to be reunited.

The flowers in the larger bear signify life and the resilience of Indigenous Peoples.

The changing colours in the dotted path illustrate the on-going search for truth, justice and healing.

The three pairs of moccasins honour and acknowledge all First Nations, Inuit and Métis children.

At the first National Gathering on Unmarked Burials in Treaty 6 Territory, Regional Chief Gerald Antoine observed that on the back of the larger bear, there is a clear outline of a child's face looking up at the sky. Although this was not intentionally part of the design, it has shown us yet another way that the children's Spirits are speaking to us all.

*"For the child taken,  
For the parent left behind."*

– TRC Final Report, 2012





**Office of the Independent  
Special Interlocutor**

for Missing Children and Unmarked  
Graves and Burial Sites associated  
with Indian Residential Schools

**Bureau de l'interlocutrice  
spéciale indépendante**

pour les enfants disparus et les tombes  
et les sépultures anonymes en lien avec  
les pensionnats indiens



**National Centre for  
Truth and Reconciliation**

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

**Centre national pour la  
vérité et la réconciliation**

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